



## FIRE DEPARTMENT

### ► **Water Your Tree So We Don't Have To!**

The Fire Department Reminds You to Water Live Christmas Trees and Prevent Fires

During the holiday season, the Farmington Hills Fire Department offers some important fire safety tips for those who decorate with live trees. Their fire education slogan says it all - "Water Your Tree So We Don't Have To!"

Live trees are a holiday staple, but they can quickly become a fire hazard if they are not kept well-watered and properly maintained. At the 2019 City-Wide Open House, firefighters demonstrated the importance of this safety message when they set a dry tree on fire and showed just how quickly it was consumed by flames. The National Fire Protection Association emphasizes that trees must be watered daily and recommends cutting at least two inches off the base of the trunk prior to placing the tree in the stand.

Artificial Christmas trees are not without their own hazards. If an artificial tree catches fire, the house can fill with smoke in a matter of seconds. Having working smoke alarms and a family escape plan that you regularly practice is a must!

With both live and artificial trees, follow these important safety tips:

- Never block an exit with the tree.
- Use Underwriters Laboratories (UL) listed lighting that has been checked for frayed or worn wires.
- Turn Christmas tree lights off when you're not at home or when you go to bed.
- Keep combustible decorations, such as kids' school ornaments, off the tree.
- Never place lit candles on a tree.



**"Water Your Tree So We Don't Have To" is a simple and catchy reminder to practice fire safety and prevent the holidays from going up in smoke!**

## ▶ PROTECT YOUR PETS AND FAMILY FROM HOUSE FIRES

As a result of COVID-19, pet adoption rates have increased. Now more than ever, pets are important members of our families that give us comfort, friendship, and unconditional love. Since our connection to them can be among the strongest relationships in our lives, pet owners need to take extra precautions to ensure their pets are safe.

Statistics from the American Kennel Club tell the disturbing story that more than 500,000 pets are affected by house fires every year. Unfortunately, pets can sometimes cause fires. According to the National Fire Protection Association, pets have a part in starting about 750 home fires per year. These involve cooking equipment, fireplaces and chimneys, space heaters, lamps, bulbs, wiring, and candles.

To keep your pets and your home safe, follow these important fire safety tips:

- Pets are curious; they may bump into, turn on or knock over cooking equipment. Always keep them away from stoves and countertops.

- When temperatures are colder, pets are attracted to the warmth of fireplaces and space heaters. Encourage them to safely snuggle up in their own beds.

- Keep pets away from open flames, heating elements, lamps, and candles. Consider using battery-operated, flameless candles that look and smell like the real thing.

- Have a pet-free zone of at least three feet away from the fireplace. Always use a metal or heat-tempered glass screen and keep it in place. Remember that glass doors and screens can stay dangerously hot for several hours after the fire goes out.

- Some pets are chewers; watch them to make sure they don't damage electrical cords. Cords that are frayed can expose the live wire, which can overheat and cause a fire.

The Fire Department reminds you to have working smoke alarms on every level of the home and to test your smoke alarms at least once a month. If the smoke alarm sounds, get



*Fire Marshal Jason Baloga with his Labrador Retriever LeRoy.*

out and stay out. Incorporate pets into fire safety drills and make sure they are included in the family fire evacuation plan.

Don't ever delay leaving your home during a fire to find pets; your personal safety could depend on a quick exit! Most importantly - never go

back inside for pets in a fire. Tell firefighters if your pet is trapped in your home.

For additional information on pet safety, contact the Fire Prevention Division at 248-871-2820 or visit [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org).



# POLICE DEPARTMENT



## ► POLICE DEPARTMENT SAFE TRANSACTION ZONES

The parking lot and lobby at the Farmington Hills Police Department are both available for use as Safe Transaction Zones for residents who are buying, selling or trading items from strangers.

The Police Department parking lot is located at 31655 West Eleven Mile Road, in front of the main entrance on the north side of Police Headquarters, and the lobby is located inside the front of the building. A special sign in the parking lot marks the designated Safe Transaction Zone, which is also clearly painted with green stripes.

Police Department employees cannot serve as witnesses or become involved in any purchase negotiations, but if you use the Safe Transaction Zone, it means that Police Officers will be in close proximity if needed. Please be aware that the Police Department parking lot may not be used to store any vehicles or property.

Using the Safe Transaction Zone and meeting strangers in this secure location reduces the odds of becoming a crime victim and eliminates the need to give a stranger your home or work address.



Regardless of the meeting location that you select, be aware that daylight transactions are always the safest. The Police Department reminds you to focus on your personal safety and to always trust your instincts.

For further information, contact the Command Desk at 248-871-2610.

# ► **Holiday Safety Tips from the Farmington Hills Police Department**

**The holiday season is a special time of year, but it's also a good time to be careful, prepared, and aware of your surroundings. The Farmington Hills Police Department offers the following holiday safety tips:**

## Shopping

- Stay alert to your surroundings.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Don't carry valuables in your purse.
- Stay off your cell phone and stay alert while walking.
- Avoid overloading yourself with packages so that you'll have clear visibility and freedom of movement.
- Trust your instincts; if you don't feel comfortable walking to your vehicle, ask mall or store security to go with you.

## Driving

- Park in a well-lit area if you shop in the evening.
- Don't leave packages or valuables in plain sight inside your vehicle; lock them in the trunk instead.
- Park your vehicle as close to your destination as possible.
- Keep all car doors locked and windows closed while in or out of your car.
- Locate your keys before you head to your car.
- Walk around your vehicle and check the inside before entering.

## At Home

- Consider sending packages to a family member, a friend or your workplace if you won't be home to accept them.
- Use automatic timers on all indoor and outdoor lighting.
- Make sure that large amounts of holiday gifts aren't visible through the windows and doors of your home.
- Don't open the door to individuals you don't know; speak to them through a locked door instead.
- Lock all doors and windows when leaving your residence.

## Using the ATM

- Choose an ATM in a well-lit public area and withdraw only the amount of cash that you need.
- Protect your PIN by shielding the ATM keypad from anyone standing nearby.



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## WINTER BUS STOP SAFETY TIPS FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT



The Police Department reminds drivers to use extra caution when dropping children off at the bus stop or entering and exiting subdivisions where bus stops are located.

Road conditions can be challenging during winter storms and subdivision streets can get narrower due to snow piles that accumulate following road clearing and snow removal operations.

To help keep drivers and students safe, please follow these tips:

- While waiting at the bus stop in your car with your child, you should be no closer than 30 feet from the stop sign.

- Cars should wait on one side of the road instead of both sides, making it easier for through traffic to pass by.
- When traveling in areas with bus stops, reduce your speed and watch for children walking at the side of the road or in the street, especially in subdivisions where there are no sidewalks.
- Do not use your cell phone while driving near a bus stop.

# CLERK'S OFFICE

## ▶ DOOR-TO-DOOR PEDDLERS/SOLICITORS



Any persons peddling door-to-door selling goods or services must be licensed with the City and have photo identification issued by the City Clerk's Office. Persons may only peddle/solicit between the hours of 10 a.m. and 8 p.m.

There are certain groups that are exempt from the City's licensing provisions; however they may still be required to register with the City, should be able to provide photo ID from their respective organizations, and are asked to comply with local time requirements. For questions on licensing, contact the City Clerk's Office at 248-871-2410.

If you do not wish to have peddlers/solicitors come to your door, consider posting a "No Peddling/No Soliciting" sign on your property. Subdivision associations may also post similar signage at subdivision entrances. Please be advised that State Law dictates that peddling/soliciting cannot be prohibited within the City; however licensed peddlers/solicitors must adhere to City ordinance requirements. The licensing process requires applicants to submit to a background check for review by the Police Department.

The Police Department reminds residents that you do not have to open your door for a stranger. If the person is peddling, ask them to display their City-issued ID or ID from their organization. Call the Police Department at 248-871-2600 if you have concerns. It is helpful if you can provide the name and/or organization that the person was representing and your address or subdivision name.

## ▶ UPDATE YOUR HOMEOWNER ASSOCIATION CONTACTS



The City Clerk's Office maintains a list of all Homeowner Associations with contact information. This enables the City to provide contact information to new residents and to notify Associations of upcoming developments, such as road projects, that may affect your subdivision.

Please email updated contact information annually, or as officers and contact information changes, to [jmunoz@fhgov.com](mailto:jmunoz@fhgov.com) or fax it to the City Clerk at 248-871-2411.



## HUMAN RESOURCES NOW HIRING!

The City of Farmington Hills Human Resources Department is currently hiring for several full and part-time positions in various City departments. To find out more about these positions, go to [www.fhgov.com](http://www.fhgov.com) and click on Employment.



# FINANCE DEPARTMENT

## ► 2021 PROPERTY TAX CALENDAR

**FEBRUARY 16** – Last day to pay winter property taxes without penalty.

**FEBRUARY 20** – Due date for the filing of affidavits to exempt personal property with a true cash value of \$80,000 or less.

**FEBRUARY 20** – Personal property statements due to assessor (business only).

**LATE FEBRUARY** – Change of assessment notices mailed.

**MARCH 1** – Last day to pay summer or winter property taxes at City Hall.

**MARCH 8-10** – Board of Review meets.

**JUNE 1** – Last day to file Primary Residence Exemption affidavit, for the entire tax year.

**EARLY JUNE** – Budget public hearing where City Council sets City tax rate.

**JUNE 30** – Summer tax bills mailed.

**AUGUST 31** – Last day to pay summer property taxes without penalty.

**SEPTEMBER 14** – Last day for eligible persons to file for summer tax deferral.

**NOVEMBER 2** – Last day to file Primary Residence Exemption affidavit, for winter taxes only.

**NOVEMBER 30** – Winter tax bills mailed.

**DECEMBER 31** – Taxable status set for coming year's bill.

**For more information, call the Treasurer's Office at 248-871-2480.**

## TREASURY/ASSESSING OFFICE REMINDERS

- After tax bills are mailed, amounts will be available at [www.fhgov.com](http://www.fhgov.com). Click on the Resident or Business tab and then click on Property Tax Inquiry and follow the instructions.
- Mail your tax payment to: Treasurer's Office, 31555 W. Eleven Mile Road, Farmington Hills, MI 48336. Include the top portion of your bill. Write your phone number and parcel ID number on the check. Your cancelled check is your receipt.
- The original copy of the tax bill is mailed to the owner of record. If property taxes are paid through an escrow account, the paying agent receives a separate notification. Original copies of the tax bill should be retained for income tax purposes.
- Property tax bills are mailed to the address of record. Changes of address must be filed with the City in writing. Tax bills are not forwarded by the Post Office to new addresses on file with the Post Office, unless it is a temporary forwarding only. Temporary seasonal changes may be filed with the Treasurer's Office, but permanent changes must be filed with the City Assessor. Failure to receive a tax bill does not waive the tax or any penalties for late payment.

# PUBLIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT



There are 22 miles of gravel residential roads in Farmington Hills.

## ► GRAVEL ROADS WINTER MAINTENANCE

If your home abuts one of the 22 miles of gravel residential roads in Farmington Hills, then you know that living on a gravel road can be challenging, especially during the winter. Over the years, the City's Division of Public Works has heard many concerns from residents about gravel road maintenance. There is a science to how the City maintains gravel roads and keeps them safe for travel by using specific maintenance procedures and materials.

Several times throughout the year, City staff grade, add gravel, and treat roads with a dust control product. If your road has ditches at each side, this will ensure better drainage, which is necessary for optimal road conditions. The gravel road will deteriorate more quickly if the rainwater and snow melt sit on the road surface.

The material used for gravel road surfaces is made up of stones, sand, and clay. This allows it to be shaped and compacted, forming a crust to assist with rain runoff, which also makes it easy to regrade the road. The City has received requests from residents to use limestone instead of road gravel, but limestone does not have the properties needed for proper gravel road surfaces. It is much dustier, more difficult to regrade once potholes develop, and does not carry the rain off the road and into the ditches.

During the winter, once the road freezes, not much cutting and reshaping of the surface can occur, and additional gravel is only added to fill potholes. Salt cannot be applied since it will only melt the surface ice and make the road impassable. The

City applies sand to the icy road surface to provide traction as you drive over the frozen road.

During the spring thaw (and freeze/thaw cycles), gravel roads become challenging to drive on and difficult to maintain. This is largely due to the frozen road thawing from the top down, which causes the wet top layers to "float" on the frozen subsurface until all the frost is gone. During these times, the DPW applies minimal sand as needed while trying to keep heavy equipment off the melting road surface as much as possible.

If you have questions, please contact the DPW at 248-871-2850.



## ▶ DON'T BAG YOUR RECYCLABLES

**Plastic bags of any type are not accepted in your recycling cart.**

Did you know almost half the contamination that comes through RRRASOC's sorting facility is bagged recycling? These bagged recyclables often get thrown away because the highly automated sorting process cannot tear open the bag to access the materials.

But that's not the only issue that arises when it comes to plastic bags. Have you ever heard of "tangles"? They are items that wrap around the machines used to sort materials. In addition to plastic bags, tangles include wire hangers, ropes, chains, cords, wires, plastic wrap, clothing, and hoses. The only way to remove tangles is to shut down the entire sorting process and manually cut them from the machine. Unfortunately, these tangles cause production downtime, increased operational expenses, equipment failure, and worker safety concerns.

## ▶ SNOW PLOW POLICY AND PROGRESS MAP



The Department of Public Services is responsible for snow and ice control on City major roads, including industrial routes, five miles of school designated bus routes, and 246 miles of local streets. The Road Commission for Oakland County maintains several of the other major mile roads within the City.

Major roads and school bus routes receive the highest priority and are plowed and salted following any accumulation of snow or ice. Local (subdivision) streets are plowed following an accumulation of four inches or more of snow. The City rotates

which neighborhoods are plowed first after each snow event.

Following a significant snowstorm (four or more inches in a 24-hour period), all local roads will be plowed within two days, recognizing that deeper and wetter snowfalls will require more time to complete, depending on the severity and duration of the storm.

For real-time information on City of Farmington Hills snow plowing operations, click on the Snow Plow Progress map link at <http://tinyurl.com/FHSnowPlowing>.

## 2020 HOLIDAY COLLECTION SCHEDULE GARBAGE/RECYCLING/YARD WASTE

**CHRISTMAS DAY AND NEW YEAR'S DAY** – No collection on Friday, December 25, 2020 or Friday, January 1, 2021. Monday through Thursday will be regular collection days with Friday's collection occurring on Saturday.

**MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY AND PRESIDENTS' DAY** – Collection takes place on the regularly scheduled day. City offices are closed on Monday, January 18, 2021 and Monday, February 15, 2021.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Spring yard waste pickup will resume during the week April 12, 2021.



## ▶ WINTER REMINDERS FROM THE DIVISION OF PUBLIC WORKS

### Snow Buildup at the End of Driveways

Snow plows are angled to the right for plowing from the center line of the street to the curb, making the deposit of snow at the end of driveways a natural byproduct of plowing operations. You may help alleviate some of this accumulation by clearing the area to the right of your driveway before a snow plow comes down your street. The City is unable to return to clear this deposit at the end of your driveway and is unable to prevent this from occurring at over 23,000 driveways City-wide. Please do not plow or shovel snow into the roadway.

### Fire Hydrants

Please assist the Fire Department by removing snow around fire hydrants so that they are always visible and accessible.

### Mailboxes

The post office requires snow to be cleared so mail delivery trucks can drive up to curbside mailboxes; clearing the snow is the responsibility of the postal customer. Weak or damaged mailboxes can be knocked down by the weight of snow thrown by snow plows. Give your mailbox a good shake to find out if it needs repairs in order to survive the winter.

### Safety Reminders

Drive defensively and carefully in inclement weather. When following a snow plow, please stay a safe distance behind. Always discourage children from playing on snowbanks near the road.

### Salt/Sand Barrels

The City places 55-gallon drums filled with a sand and salt mixture at

intersections and hills upon written request from homeowner groups. If your association would like barrels placed in your subdivision, please send a letter, along with a clear description or sketch of the location, to the Division of Public Works at 27245 Halsted, Farmington Hills, Michigan 48331. Please obtain the approval of the property owner adjacent to the selected location, since spilled salt may burn their grass.

### Be a Good Neighbor

The elderly and disabled often need help removing snow from their driveways after a snowstorm. If you know of someone who needs help, please lend a hand!

### Questions?

Call the DPW at 248-871-2850.

# THANKS FOR RECYCLING RIGHT!

## PLEASE RECYCLE THESE



Cartons



Paper & Cardboard



Plastic Bottles



Aluminum & Steel Cans



Glass Bottles & Jars

## KEEP THESE OUT OF THE BIN AND CART



Plastic Bags



Foam Products



Household Trash



Batteries



Large Scrap Metal



Shredded Paper

VISIT [WWW.RRRASOC.ORG](http://WWW.RRRASOC.ORG) AND SEARCH THE RECYCLING DIRECTORY TO LEARN WHERE TO RECYCLE THESE.



THE RECYCLING AUTHORITY

FUNDED IN PART BY:



# PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## TIPS FOR STORING FIREWOOD

### Please follow City Zoning Ordinances when storing firewood:

- The outside storage of more than two face cords of firewood is prohibited unless the wood is being used for a wood burning appliance for the dwelling on the lot or parcel.
- Firewood must be stored in a structure that is at least three inches above the ground, not more than 48 inches in height, and not more than 10 feet in length.

### If you have a wood-burning fireplace or heating stove, you'll need to prepare your firewood for the season. Follow these tips to ensure proper firewood preparation and storage:

- Don't stack firewood directly on the ground – Wood can pick up moisture that causes mold, mildew, and decay. Putting firewood in direct contact with the soil also attracts insects. If you don't have a concrete area for stacking firewood, consider stacking it on wooden beams or pallets.
- Check to make sure your wood is seasoned – Properly seasoned firewood burns more efficiently so you get more heat from your fires and less creosote in your chimney. Wood should be grayish, and bark should be splitting and separating from the wood. When you light the wood, seasoned logs will crackle, while wet wood will steam and hiss.



- Cover your woodpile – While your firewood is being seasoned, exposing it to wind and sun can help dry it out. But once dried, it's important to cover your woodpile to keep the logs from reabsorbing moisture. If you don't have a covered area, a tarp over the top will work.
- Firewood should be stored away from your home – Logs stacked against the house invite pests like termites into your foundation. You can bring smaller stacks of wood into your garage or in-home wood rack daily or as needed.
- Stack wood loosely – Don't cram logs too closely together since you need air to circulate around the woodpile to keep logs dry and free from decay.
- Consider stacking logs in alternating directions to increase air flow - If you have multiple rows of woodpiles, keep them six to 12 inches apart for air flow between them.
- Don't stack wood too high – Limit the height of your woodpile to around four feet, so you don't compromise the stability of the structure. Consider placing posts at each end of your woodpile to prevent the pile from toppling over.
- No storage of firewood in the front yard is allowed.

## ► HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM HOME REPAIR LOANS

Funding for zero-interest, deferred home repair loans is provided by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Office (HUD). Homeowners may be eligible for loans to replace roofs, windows, furnaces,

septic fields or hot water tanks. To qualify, applicants must own and occupy a home in Farmington Hills and the family must meet Federal income guidelines. A family of four, for example, must have

a gross income of less than \$62,800. For information, call the Community Development Office at 248-871-2543 or go to [www.fhgov.com](http://www.fhgov.com), and search for Housing Rehabilitation Program.

# EXPLORE THE CITY'S HISTORIC STRUCTURES

**Farmington Hills Historic Districts**  
A story map | Facebook | Twitter | LinkedIn

Cataloging historic structures throughout Farmington/Farmington Hills.

**Elliott Sprague House (Orchard Lane Farm): (Site #205)**

Built ca. 1840 as a store in Sleepy Hollow; during the 1880's the house was moved to the top of Drake Road hill and served as the farmhouse home on the Elliot Sprague farm. It was known for many years as the Orchard Lane Farm.

22 The Parsonage: (Site #203) | 23 Eri Prince House: (Site #204) | 24 Elliott Sprague House (Orchard Lane Farm): (Site #205) | 25 Drake House: (Site #206) | 26 Nehemiah Hoyt House: (Site #207) | 27 Dennis Conroy House: (Site #210) | 28 John Cox House: (Site #211) | 29 Addis Emmi (Site #212)

Within the City of Farmington Hills, there are many homes and structures with historical and cultural significance. The City's Historic District Commission has catalogued these buildings and their locations and made the information easily available online.

Interactive historic property maps allow residents, visitors, historians or students to explore the City's historic properties via their computer or smartphone. The maps are available on the Historic District Commission website at [www.fhgov.com/Community/HistoricDistrict.asp](http://www.fhgov.com/Community/HistoricDistrict.asp) or via direct link to the map at <http://bit.ly/1rX8cRo>.

Included are property locations, historical narratives, and photos. Several structures also feature YouTube links to in-depth video tours of the historic homes created by the Historic District Commission in cooperation with the City's Video Division.

For more information, contact GIS Coordinator Matt Malone at 248-871-2434 or [mmalone@fhgov.com](mailto:mmalone@fhgov.com).

## HOUSING DISCRIMINATION NOTICE

Housing discrimination is prohibited by law. Everyone has a right, by law, to rent, purchase or obtain financing or insurance for housing without discrimination based upon RACE, COLOR, SEX, NATIONAL ORIGIN, RELIGION, AGE, MARITAL, FAMILIAL or DISABILITY STATUS. Both State of Michigan and Federal laws apply to the actions of owners, real estate brokers or agents, apartment managers, cooperatives, condominiums, mortgage lenders, appraisers or residential insurers, and they prohibit, with few exceptions, any differences in treatment based on any of the protected characteristics.

For more information on housing discrimination, visit [www.hud.gov/fairhousing](http://www.hud.gov/fairhousing). If you have a housing discrimination complaint, contact the Michigan Department of Civil Rights at 313-456-3700 or the HUD hotline at 1-800-669-9777 or 1-800-927-9275 (TTY).